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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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DIA
USMISSION NATO
USCINCEUR, VAIHINGEN, GERMANY
AMCONGEN MILAN
AMCONGEN NAPLES
US DOCOSOUTH
SHAPEUSNR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13087

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

SHAPEUSNR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT, VT
SUBJECT: VATICAN COMMENTARY ON NEW MAYOR OF ROME

REF: ROME 13005

SUMMARY: VATICAN COMMENTARIES DURING COURSE OF LAST FEW WEEKS REGARDING THE DEBATES ON THE FORMATION OF NEW JUNTA FOR CITY OF ROME HAVE BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY OBJECTIVITY, CIRCUMSPECTION AND PRUDENCE. AFTER HAVEING LOST ENERGETIC FIGHT TO PREVENT "CITY OF GOD" FROM BEING TURNED OVER TO "GOD-LESS" ADMINI-
STRATORS, CHURCH AND VATICAN MUST DEVELOP NEW LINE TO GOVERN NECESSARY CONTACTS ON INNUMERABLE ISSUES WITH LEFTIST ADMINI-
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STRATORS OF ROME. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN COURSE OF LAST THREE WEEKS, VATICAN ORGAN L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO COVERED DEBATES ON FORMATION OF NEW JUNTA FOR CITY OF ROME IN OBJECTIVE FASHION AND UNTIL TODAY WITHOUT ANY COMMENTARY. TODAY'S ISSUE OF VATICAN ORGAN HAS LONG ARTICLE WHICH REPORTS IN STRAIGHT-FORWARD MANNER THE VOTES OF VARIOUS PARTIES IN ELECTION OF PROF. GIULIO CARLO ARGAN, " INDEPENDENT OF THE LEFT ELECTED ON PCI LIST, "AS THE NEW MAYOR OF THE CAPITAL. ARTICLE ENDS WITH COMMENTARY WHICH:

-- TAKES EXCEPTION TO ASSERTION BY TURIN'S LA STAMPA THAT ELECTION OF ARGAN IS HISTORICALLY LINKED TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF LAST "LAY" MAYOR OF ROME (1914), THE "GREAT ANTICLERICAL ORATOR ERNESTO NATHAN." VATICAN ORGAN SAYS THAT THINKING IN THESE TERMS IS "ANACHRONISTIC," "BELONGING SPIRITUALLY AND POLITICALLY TO PREHISTORIC TIMES" WHICH HAVE BEEN WIPED OUT BY TWO TERRIBLE WARS.

-- NOTES WITH APPARENT APPROVAL EXCERPT FROM PROF. ARGAN'S INSTALLATION STATEMENT TO EFFECT THAT "ROME IS AN INTERNATIONAL CITY NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT IS THE SEAT OF THE PAPACY AND BECAUSE IT IS THE ONLY CITY OF THE WORLD HOSTING TWO DIPLOMATIC CORPS, BUT ALSO BECAUSE, AT LEAST SINCE THE 1500'S, IT IS ONE OF THE GREAT CENTERS OF WORLD CULTURE."

-- CONCLUDES WITH AFFIRMATION THAT THE VALUES SYMBOLIZED BY CHRISTIAN AND CATHOLIC ROME ARE BEYOND THE ALTERNATIVES OF HOSTORY EVEN THROUGH A SECULARIZED CIVILIZATION IS EVER MORE LED OFFICIALLY TO IGNORE THEM.

2. THE ITALIAN CHATHOLIC CHURCH HIERARCHY'S ORGAN L'AVVENIRE ON AUG. 11 REPRINTS LONG EXCERPT FROM L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO AND IN SEPARATE ARTICLE PRINTS EXCEPTS FO SPEECHES OF DC SPOKESMAN, INCLUDING ONE FROM RANIERO BAENDETTO, LEADER OF DC COUNCIL GROUP, WHCIH IN ESSENCE HOLDS THAT THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT CATHOLICS ARE IN OPPOSITION IN CITY OF ROME, THAT REFERENCE TO NATHAN AS ONLY "LAY" MAYOR IS INAPPROPRIATE SINCE DC MAYORS OF PAST 30 YEARS WERE ALSO LAY AND CONCLUDES WITH STATEMENT THAT NEW JUNTA ISN'T SO REVOLUTIONARY WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THAT SOME SOCIALIST AND SOCIALDEMOCRATIC COUNCILMEN HAVE, IN THE COURSE OF PAST YEARS, SHARED THE TASK OF ADMINISTERING ROME WITH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS.
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3. COMMENT: IN FACE OF EXISTING POLITICAL REALITIES, VATICAN CIRCUMSPECTION AND PRUDENCE ARE TO BE EXPECTED. HAVING LOST AN ENERGETIC FIGHT TO PREVENT THE "CITY OF GOD" FROM BEING TURNED OVER TO "GOD-LESS" ADMINISTRATORS, BOTH THE VATICAN AND ITALIAN CHURCH NOW WILL HAVE TO DEAL ON INNUMERABLE ISSUES WITH LEFTIST ADMINISTRATION. OBVIOUSLY, A NEW LINE HAS TO BE EVOLVED FROM THE HIGHEST LEVELS TO GUIDE THE UNAVOIDABLE

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CONTACTS THAT CHURCH ADMINISTRATORS MUST HAVE WITH COMMUNIST, SOCIALIST AND SOCIALDEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATORS OF THE CITY OF ROME. IN THE MEANTIME, CONTACTS WILL BE AND LARGE BE GUIDED BY FOLLOWING STATEMENT MADE BY CARDINAL POLETTI, VICAR OF ROME, IN AFTERMATH OF JUNE 20 ELECTIONS: " FROM THIS MOMENT, WE CAN ASSURE THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION THAT WILL BE ELECTED RESPECT, DUE HOMAGE AND COLLABORATION WITHIN THE LIMITS OF RECIPROCAL COMPETENCES, AS IS THE DUTY OF ALL UPRIGHT CITIZENS".

4. THERE IS EVIDENT IN THE INSTALLATION SPEECH, THAT THE NEW MAYOR REFLECTS THE GENERAL COMMUNIST PARTY APPROACH TO DEALINGS WITH THE CHURCH, THAT IS, APPROPRIATE REFERENCES TO CHRISTIAN CHARACTER OF THE CITY OF ROME, AND NONPOLEMICAL REFERENCES TO THE NEED FOR SOLVING THE ILLS OF ROME THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE. IT IS ALSO SIGNIFICANT THAT THE ARTICLE IN L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO QUOTES WITH APPARENT APPROVAL FOLLOWING WORDS OF DC COUNCILMAN BENEDETTO (SEE PARA 3 ABOVE): "WE ARE LIVING IN A DIFFICULT MOMENT WHICH DOES NOT ALLOW ANYONE, MUCH LESS A GREAT PARTY LIKE THE DC, POSITIONS OF WALL AGAINST WALL, AND BLOC AGAINST BLOC. THE DC EXPRESSES ITS CONSTRUCTIVE OPPOSITION TO THE JUNTA THROUGH CASTING OF BLANK CALLOTS WITH REGARD TO THE MAYOR AND JUNTA."

5. BASED ON OUR PRESENT READING OF VATICAN ATTITUDES, WE BELIEVE THAT ESCHEWING "WALL TO WALL" CONFRONTATION DOES NOT SIGNIFY ANY DIMINUTION IN VATICAN'S OPPOSITION TO "HISTORIC COMPROMISE". POLITICAL REALITIES, HOWEVER,ARE FORCING ON CHURCH AND VATICAN THE NECESSITY FOR EVOLVING NEW OPERATING RELATIONSHIPS WITH LEFTIST JUNTA, INCLUDING COMMUNIST COUNCIL-MEN. VOLPE

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